

The Elusive Elevator Speech: Tips on How to Comm

Everyone has been to the proverbial dinner party or neighborhood event only to be met with, “So, what do you do?” Generally our responses fall into the path of least resistance: “I’m a lawyer,” or maybe “I do estate planning.” However, in today’s market, a key element of your marketing and growth strategy should be focused on furthering relationships with your network of contacts you have built by letting them know specifically what you do and the value you bring to your clients.

As you develop your elevator speech, consider first what makes you unique as a professional. Use the concepts in this article to build a solid elevator speech that differentiates you from other lawyers. To help you on this journey, please consider the following questions:

Define the Areas of Expertise that Differentiate You

Take a moment and look at your practice. There are a lot of lawyers in Minnesota. What skills and expertise do you have that is more refined and focused than other lawyers you know? If you are a general practice lawyer, you might focus in the manufacturing industry. If you are a litigator, you might represent families whose children were injured by the vaccinations they received. You could be a personal injury lawyer focused on motorcycle accidents, or a family law practitioner with a focus on foreign adoptions. Really think about what differentiates you from other lawyers. Questions to consider:

- What services do I offer?
- What is my highest level of expertise?
- Who is my target market?
- Who are my ideal clients?
- Who are my competitors?



Identify Why Your Clients Choose You

With all the competition in the legal industry, it is important to know and understand why your clients chose you over the hundreds of other lawyers providing (what clients think are) the same services. After a client signs a retainer agreement, thank them for choosing you and ask them what led to their decision to work with you (you were referred by my closest friend, you came highly recommended, I saw your blog post on the very topic I needed to hire you for, etc.) These gems of wisdom from your new clients provide the foundation of a strong and persuasive elevator speech.



Communicate Your Niche

By Terrie S. Wheeler

Determine What You Want to Be Known For

An elevator speech should be aspirational. It does not need to reflect what you do on a day-to-day basis. Rather, it must convey what you would *like* to be doing. Maybe you have done three of four cases involving disability discrimination and realize if the vast majority of your work came from this niche area, you would be happy. Therefore, your elevator speech must discuss the passion you have for working with people who have experienced discrimination in the workplace because of their disability, and focus on your approach to dealing with this type of client. As you contemplate what you want to be known for, consider:

- What value do I provide my clients?
- What is unique about my service?
- What concerns do I alleviate for my target market?
- What do I want my clients to tell others about me when they are referring me?

Use This Tool to Develop Your Elevator Speech

Use the six steps below to develop an elevator speech that shows the value you bring to your clients:

1. Summarize in one simple sentence what you do or what service you provide.
2. Describe the features that set you apart from your competition.
3. Discuss a scenario that best reflects your best and highest use as an attorney.
4. Identify your philosophy for practicing law; why you enjoy helping clients solve complicated problems.
5. Give an example of a successful outcome from serving a past or current client.
6. You can use this simple template: I help (your ideal client)(get this benefit) with or by (your service).

The key to success in marketing is being able to concisely communicate the value you bring to your clients.



My Offer to You

Spend an hour or so working through the steps identified in this article, then send me your elevator speech to review! You can send it to Terrie@psm-marketing.com. I will review it and provide specific ways in which you can further refine this important message. Watch for next month's article on How Busy Lawyers Can Engage on Social Media, and learn how to maximize your time online.



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